

~~SECRET~~ Palestine 461-8795 NOTES
System of Command of the Arab Forces 282
1948 9.2.48
WASHINGTON ONLY Arab League

The following, dated 6th February, is from a reliable source

(i) There were stormy meetings of the Arab League Military Committee in Damascus on February 4th and February 5th. Tehe el Hashimi presided, and the Mufti and Subhi Khadra were present.

(ii) The Mufti proposed that Palestine should be divided into five operational sectors. Each sector should have two commanders of equal status, one for the Arab Higher Executive and one for the Arab League Military Committee. Hashimi insisted on a single command in each sector.

(iii) The final decisions were:

(a) Commander-in-chief of all operations: General Ismail Safwat.

(b) Officer commanding Jerusalem sector: Abdul Qadir el Hussaini.

(c) Jaffa/Jerusalem road: Hassan Salameh.

(d) Nablud/Tulkarm area: Fawzi Qawuqji.

(e) Southern sector to be under command of an Egyptian (no detailed decision was taken).

(f) Jaffa and Haifa each to be considered a fortress under direct command of Ismail Safwat.

(iv) A delegate of the Arab Higher Executive to be attached to each sector command.

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1. At meetings of the Arab League Military Committee held in Damascus on 4-5 February, the Mafdi proposed that Palestine be divided into five operational sectors. He proposed that each sector have two commanders of equal status, one for the Arab League Military Committee and one for the Arab Higher Executive. He was opposed by Faha Hashimi, however, who insisted upon a single commander for each sector.
2. Final decisions of the Committee reportedly were as follows:
 - a. Commander-in-Chief of all operations: Ismail Safwat;
 - b. Commander of the Jerusalem sector: 'Abd-al-Qadir Husayni;
 - c. Commander of the Jaffa-Jerusalem Road sector: Husein Salameh;
 - d. Commander of the Hebron-Tulkarm sector: Fawzi Qusayji;
 - e. Commander of the southern sector: an unspecified Egyptian.
 - f. Jaffa and Haifa are to be considered as fortresses under the direct command of Ismail Safwat.
 - g. A delegate of the Arab Higher Executive is to be attached to each sector command.

a. Information from other sources indicates that the armed forces under Hachim are broken into formations referred to as divisions, although the strength of each is not more than that of a brigade. These divisions are as follows: (1) Haji Amin Husayni; (2) Yamuk; (3) Salvation. The Palestine Police allegedly state that a fourth division, the Badr, has also been organized.

b. It has been estimated that troops in the Nablus area number 1,500 and that there are approximately the same number in the Galilee district, with the heaviest concentration at Beisan. Such estimates represent only the troops from the above named formations.

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